

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for surveying candidates who may be interested in an educational institution comprising the steps of:

- (a) obtaining a list of candidates who are believed to have an interest in attending an educational institution;
- (b) developing a data base relating to the candidates;
- (c) using the information in the data base to segment the candidates into one or more candidate segments based on one or more criteria established by the educational institution;
- (d) establishing an Internet based web page containing a survey form;
- (e) preparing a mailing package for each candidate which includes an incentive to respond and a unique user name and password for accessing the survey form by the Internet;
- (f) distributing the mailing package to each candidate; and
- (g) evaluating the interest of each candidate completing a survey.

2. A method for electronically surveying those candidates who may be interested in an educational institution comprising the steps of:

- (a) obtaining a list of candidates who are believed to have an interest in attending an educational institution;
- (b) developing a data base relating to the candidates;
- (c) using the information in the data base to segment the candidates based on one or more criteria established by the educational institution;

(d) establishing an Internet based web page containing a survey form;

(e) e-mailing each candidate from a named individual at an e-mail address which includes the name of the institution a unique user name and password for electronically accessing the survey form and a hyperlink to the survey form; and

(f) evaluating the interest of each candidate completing a survey.

3. The method of Claim 2 wherein the hyperlink is specially coded for those candidates who use AMERICA ONLINE.

4. The method of Claim 2 wherein the survey form is customized using information from the data base.

5. The method of Claim 2 wherein the survey form is customized with graphics as a function preselected candidate information in the data base.

6. The method of Claim 5 wherein the information is related to an extracurricular activity.

7. The method of Claim 5 wherein the survey form is interactive in that modifications to the survey are made in response to responses entered by the candidate.

8. The method of Claim 2 wherein the data base is automatically updated by the information provided in the survey.

9. The method of Claim 2 wherein the unique identifier is locked out upon completion of the survey to thereby prevent multiple surveys from the same candidate.

10. The method of Claim 2 wherein the web site is only accessible by a user with a unique identifier.

11. The method of Claim 2 including the further step of following up with a second e-mail a predetermined time after the initial e-mail in the absence of a response.

12. The method of Claim 2 including the real time monitoring of the web site.

13. The method of Claim 2 including the step of updating a separate reporting web site indicative of cumulative activity of all candidates.

14. The method of Claim 13 wherein the reporting web site includes the number of candidates responding to each question on the survey.

15. The method of Claim 2 further comprising the steps of:

(h) compiling the results of the evaluation of all candidates completing the survey; and

(i) forwarding the compiled results to the educational institution.

16. A method for surveying candidates who may be interested in an educational institution comprising the steps of:

(a) obtaining a list of candidates who are believed to have an interest in attending an educational institution;

(b) developing a data base relating to the candidates;

(c) using the information in the data base to segment the candidates based on one or more criteria established by the educational institution;

- (d) establishing an Internet based web page containing a survey form;
- (e) preparing a mailing package for each candidate which includes (1) an incentive to respond, (2) a unique user name and password for accessing the survey form by the Internet, and (3) a postage prepaid response card;
- (f) distributing the mailing package to each candidate; and
- (g) e-mailing each candidate from a named individual at an e-mail address which includes the name of the institution a unique user name and password for electronically accessing the survey form and a hyperlink to the survey form; and
- (h) evaluating the interest of each candidate completing a survey.

17. In a method for determining the interest of candidates in attending an educational institution, the improvement comprising the steps of electronically surveying the candidate with a survey in which subsequent questions are dynamically varied as a function of the responses to previous questions.

18. In a method for determining the interest of candidates in attending an educational institution, the improvement comprising the steps of electronically contacting the candidate to provide a hyperlink to an electronic survey customized with information previously obtained about the candidate.

19. The method of Claim 18 wherein the candidate is also provided with a unique identification and including the further step of disabling the unique identification upon the completion of a survey.

20. In a method for marketing an educational institution to candidates contained in a data base over a prolonged period of time, the improvement comprising the steps of personalizing all communications from the institution to the candidate with information from the data base.

21. The method of Claim 20 including the further step of automatically updating the data base with information provided by the candidate's electronic communication with the institution.

22. In a method for determining the interest of candidates in attending an educational institution, the improvement comprising the step of using a predetermined metric to electronically convert a free form response to an electronic survey to an indication of interest.

23. In a method for marketing an educational institution to candidates contained in a data base over a prolonged period of time prior to the application for enrollment, the improvement comprising the steps of automatically updating the data base with information provided by the candidate's electronic communication with the institution and personalizing all communications from the institution to the candidate with current information from the data base.